

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## JOYEUX NOËL FROM FRANCE



My name is Sophie. I live with my family in Paris, which is the capital of France. I am in such a good mood, because finally it is less than a month until Christmas.

Christmas is my favorite season. It is a month of celebrations, family and friends. It starts on December 6<sup>th</sup>, which is *la Fête de Saint Nicolas*, the feast of St. Nicholas. I'm not a little kid anymore, so this celebration is not a big deal for me, but one year when I was little my parents took me to a town called Saint-Nicolas-de-Port. We watched their parades and festivities. That was really fun, and so even if I don't put my shoes out for St. Nicholas to fill with presents, I still remember that happy day, and the wonderful taste of *mannala*, the chocolate-covered cakes in the shape of St. Nicholas.

From now until December 24<sup>th</sup>, there will be shopping, decorating, and other fun Christmas activities. If December 8<sup>th</sup> is on a weekend, we go to visit my grandmother in Lyon for *la Fête de lumières*, the festival of lights. Everyone puts candles in their windows to honor the Virgin Mary. All the houses and all the shops have candles or lights in every window; the big businesses even put on light shows. The effect of all these lights is that the whole town looks like a fairy world. It's very beautiful.

On Christmas Eve, we go to *la Messe de Minuit*, the midnight Mass. We sing *chant de Noël*, Christmas carols. When we come home, I am still quite excited from all the singing and the beautiful church smells. I put my shoes under the *sapin de Noël*, the Christmas tree, and every year I swear that *this* time, I will stay awake until *Le Père Noël*, Father Christmas, comes. But somehow I never make it. He always comes, though, and decorates the tree with fruits and nuts, and he always puts a special surprise in my shoes: *les cadeaux de Noël*, Christmas presents.

Some of my friends are afraid of *Le Père Noël*... or rather, of his companion *Le Père Fouettard*, Father Spanker. But *Le Père Fouettard* never comes to my house and anyway I am very good, so I have nothing to worry about.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer the questions about *MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM FRANCE*.  
Please write in complete sentences.**

1. According to the story, when does the Christmas season start?

---

---

2. How is *la Fête de Saint Nicolas* celebrated?

---

---

3. Where do people celebrate *la Fête de lumières*?

---

---

4. How is *la Fête de lumières* celebrated?

---

---

---

5. In the story, where does the girl put her shoes? Why does she put them there (what happens to them)?

---

---

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**JOYEUX NOËL FROM FRANCE**  
**Vocabulary Review**

**Match the French words to their English equivalents.**

mannala

Father Spanker

chant de Noël

Festival of lights

les cadeaux de Noël

Christmas carols

sapin de Noël

Christmas presents

Le Père Noël

Father Christmas

Le Père Fouettard

the feast of St. Nicholas

la Messe de Minuit

chocolate-covered cakes in the  
shape of St. Nicholas

la Fête de Saint Nicolas

Christmas tree

la Fête de lumières

midnight Mass

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Answers to *JOYEUX NOËL FROM FRANCE*

### Comprehension

1. Christmas season starts on December 6<sup>th</sup>, which is *la Fête de Saint Nicolas*, the feast of St. Nicholas.
2. There are parades and festivities. Children put out shoes for St. Nicholas to fill with presents. People eat *mannala*, which are chocolate-covered cakes in the shape of St. Nicholas.
3. *La Fête de lumières* is celebrated in Lyon.
4. People put candles in their windows to honor the Virgin Mary. Houses and shops have candles or lights in every window. Big businesses put on light shows.
5. The girl puts her shoes under the *sapin de Noël*, the Christmas tree. *Le Père Noël*, Father Christmas, fills them with *les cadeaux de Noël*, Christmas presents.

### Matching

*Mannala*- chocolate-covered cakes in the shape of St. Nicholas

*chant de Noël*-Christmas carols

*les cadeaux de Noël*-Christmas presents

*sapin de Noël*-Christmas tree

*Le Père Noël*-Father Christmas

*Le Père Fouettard*-Father Spanker

*la Messe de Minuit*-midnight Mass

*la Fête de Saint Nicolas*-the feast of St. Nicholas

*la Fête de lumières*-the festival of lights